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FRONTENAC AND MILES STANDISH IN THE NORTHWEST.

A PAPER

READ BEFORE THE

NEW YORK HISTORICAL SOCIETY

TUESDAY, DECEMBER 4, 1888,

BY THE

HON. EDWARD S. ISHAM.



NEW YORK:
PRINTED FOR THE SOCIETY.
1889.

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The Hon. EDWARD S. ISHAM, of Chicago, read the paper of the evening entitled "*Frontenac and Miles Standish in the Northwest.*"

On its conclusion the Librarian submitted the following resolution, which was adopted unanimously :

Resolved, That the thanks of the Society be, and hereby are, presented to the Hon. EDWARD S. ISHAM, for his interesting and valuable paper, read this evening, and that a copy be requested for publication.

Extract from the Minutes, .

ANDREW WARNER,

Recording Secretary.

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FRONTENAC AND MILES STANDISH IN THE NORTHWEST.

ONE may well seem challenged for his vindication who presumes to revive in this place discussion of the subject now suggested. But any one whose thought is engaged by that region which as a historical unit peculiarly holds the inheritance of the early New England colonization, will gladly find there also a revelation of the movement that, perhaps, links the development of the past with the remote future.

The colonial histories have been said to be important only as leading up to the war of the revolution, and to the establishment, by the federal union, of independence and a distinguished new member of the family of nations. It has been said that until then they "do not assume the importance and value of the history of a nation," finding their ultimate service in the accomplishment of that result. But it has come to be seen that there is a universal history, a line of progressive movement connecting all historical movements together. The earliest records open with a populous earth, with civil government in operation, and culture and civilization already in course of development. Their beginning is lost, but through ages inconceivably long there has been produced an increasing heritage of principles of universal value both in civil culture and the conditions of its security and advancement. To this priceless and lengthening chain successive historical movements bring unconsciously their contribution, and in relation to it all peoples become involuntarily one progressive community. One fastens eagerly upon the links of that chain wherever their gleam can be caught; but we are so much inclined to please ourselves with the radiance of some attain-

ments of our times, with the apparent giving way of some old barriers of thought, and with an obvious amelioration of the conditions of modern life, that we perhaps mistake a little dawn for the broad day, and fail to observe how close behind us, after all, and even around us, are still the gloom and the shadows of the primal forest that we think we have emerged from, and through which has penetrated that painful and unmeasurable way to the opening of which all historic races have brought their aid. It may be readily understood that no personal memoirs are intended of the renowned captain of the Pilgrims or of the illustrious governor of New France ; but they signally typify two great movements, contemporary and almost equally distinguished, which, though very remote in origin, so converged as to expend their force in a singular degree upon the Northwest, and by their contrasted character and inherent tendencies aid us to get our own bearings and bring us directly upon vital questions of our own time.

One of these movements, which was distinctly ecclesiastical and seigniorial, entered upon our continent through the avenue of the great St. Lawrence River and the Lakes. The qualities of poverty and discipline, of self-sacrifice and martyrdom, were glorified at Pampeluna in the reveries of Loyola, and found their exponent in that unique Society of Jesus, which has been unequalled in the world in the efficient devotion of its members to their faith, and above all things to their *Order*. A prodigious opulence and power of the Order itself, with an unparalleled arrogance of dominion arose upon poverty and personal humility in the lower ranks, through matchless enterprise and skill of administration. Its priests were sent into every accessible corner of the world. No voyage of discovery, no tale of any wandering adventurer indicated the existence of an unvisited people, but men went instantly upon the work of exploration and conversion ; and no courage could surpass that of men whose exaltation of spirit rose with the appearance of peril and the chance of suffering and death in remote recesses of savage regions and savage society.

The civil society of France was rooted in the severest feudalism of Northern Europe. Feudalism throughout all its gradations was an organization of servitude, mitigated in the upper ranks by arbitrary privileges and prerogatives, which diminished as the rank descended, so that the burden of servitude accumulated as it fell from grade to grade, and rested with hopeless and crushing oppression upon the great mass of the people at the bottom. We behold it in a retrospect giving origin to picturesque manners and architecture, and associated with institutions of piety and charity; and the development of chivalry, the glory of the Crusades, the heroism of famed men, and the lustre of great events, unite to beguile our thought from the fact that all that exists of freedom and of popular security in modern states has been won in spite of feudalism, and has been rescued from the doom of slavery to which that institution consigned society. There was no room within it for any principle of civil liberty. The first condition of liberty was what is now called Nihilism. Every step gained was an annihilation *pro tanto* of some feudal element. The doctrines which live in our Declaration of Independence and in the Constitution of the United States were also the first flowers that blossomed at the foot of the French guillotine. In the times of Francis I. and Henry IV. the privilege and prerogative of the twelve peers who stood around the throne of Hugh Capet were shared among two hundred grand seigniors who had succeeded them. These represented the landed estates, the great titles, the ostentation and arrogance and splendor of living, and the social and political power which supported the monarchy. They were the class whose power was broken by Richelieu to build the absolutism of Louis XIV. Outlying these was a large body of the nobility, and a greater multitude of gentlemen, noble by caste but untitled, touchy and proud, penniless but ambitious, hunting for pocket-money and for fortune, full of the spirit of adventure, infinitely expert with their rapiers, and ready to sell them to the service of any superior nobleman who would employ and pay for them. Their gentility of birth excluded them by law from ordinary occupations of

trade and commerce, but they hovered about the splendors of the Louvre, and the later ones of Versailles, and formed the retinues of the great nobles. Below these lay the trading and artisan people of the cities and large towns, and the hopeless subjection of the country peasantry. This was, however, that age that was distinguished by the awakening of the intellect of Europe. Scholarship and science had revived with printing. Men began to think. Language was improved by Rabelais and Montaigne. Luther, and the deeper heresy of Calvin, set thought free upon ecclesiasticism. Something of art and refinement came in from Italy, and the Italian survival of Roman municipal citizenship had brought about the enfranchisement of the communes. Out of these conditions came the civil founders of New France.

On the surface of the round globe, in the summer of 1534, perhaps no movement of equal portent was less conspicuous than the slow creeping of the white sails of Jacques Cartier's little vessels up the stream of that great flood, the St. Lawrence River. But one ship of adventurers followed another, and Champlain came, and the Jesuits, and the first colony in Canada was founded on the great rock of Quebec in 1608, and more substantially in 1620. In that year the Mayflower landed her company, and in the same year Frontenac was born. Year by year colonists came from France; shiploads of peasants, traders, seamen from St. Malo and other seaport towns, a few ruined noblemen, adventurers of every class, penniless gentlemen, officers and soldiers, women in companies, and always Jesuits and a few Franciscan priests, to whom it was appalling that the heathen Indians should perish when a few drops of water would bring them to the state of grace of the baptized but unsanctified hunters of fortune who represented the civil state of France in the New World. A fringe of timorous settlements developed for two or three hundred miles along the borders of the narrowing river. Behind the settlements lay a wilderness of distrustful savages. It was the tentative approach, the stealthy creeping into the bosom of a new world of a form of society that had worn out the conditions of life and subsistence in Europe. It was the fas-

tening of an antique parasite upon a new body pulsating in all the infinite springs and currents that feed the requirements of social and political development. The colony gained vigor and courage as it drew into the presence of that magnificent citadel of nature whereon the city of Quebec was founded, and which impressed the earliest explorers as a spot appointed by fate to be the capital of an empire. It is upon this cold, gray rock, this anticipation of imperial eminence, that we first behold, in 1672, the unique and feudal figure of Louis, Comte de Frontenac, the Governor of Canada, and Lieutenant-General of Louis XIV. of France.

The background against which this figure is projected is the Europe of Anne of Austria and Mazarin ; of the regicides and of Cromwell ; of Louis XIV. and the Prince of Orange ; of the Venetian wars with the Turks ; of Turenne, Condé, Marlborough, and Gustavus Adolphus. On it are taking place historic wars, and battles great in the politics of Europe. The Czar Peter appears in his shop at Zaandam ; the Turks of Kara Mustapha, with their horse-tail standards, are before Vienna, and John Sobieski is on the heights of the Kalenberg ; the royal charters and grants of American territory are issued, and the great movements of colonization are going on. Frontenac himself belonged rather high in the ranks of the nobility, but his fortune was slender and soon wasted. His life was spent brilliantly as a soldier in the camps of the Prince of Orange, in command of the regiment of Normandy in Italian campaigns, and in the defence of Candia—the Crete of Ariadne and King Minos. He was made a colonel at seventeen years of age, and was, it is said, an eminent lieutenant-general at twenty-nine, covered with decorations and scars. It was not pleasure, but ambition, that made him accept an exile in a world of savages and adventurers. There, it seemed, was to be reproduced, in its beginnings, the same social system he left at home. There were to be gained new lordships and seigniories and fortunes, with which he might return to the court of Versailles.

In France the nobles, who with increasing numbers but diminishing powers had meddled with the administration of

every king from Capet to Louis XII., saw their last vestige of share in the government disappear on the scaffolds of Richelieu. But their prerogatives that Richelieu destroyed were those that might impede the king. Their rights and prerogatives as against the social grades below them were not the objects of his jealousy. When, therefore, great seigniories were carved out and granted in Canada, and established under the code of French laws known as the "Customs of Paris," the political and social conditions of feudal France were also established, and were fastened upon the reluctant borders of the great river, and the forest freedom of independent tribes. In the midst and at the head of such a system stood Frontenac at Quebec. He was the fitting representative of Louis XIV. He was the perfect impersonation of his imperial spirit and policy, and of the political system of his time. Our purpose here is not with the general history of Canada, nor with the personal history of Frontenac, but with the social and political movement of which he was the representative. Apart from the easy acquisition of landed estates, and the hopes that lay in industry and tillage, a special allure enticed the traders and emigrants into the northern wilderness. All the opulence of this part of the world lay on the backs of the little animals that roamed the forests or lived on the banks of the numerous and abundant streams. What diamonds were to Golconda, pearls to Cape Comorin, gold mines to Mexico and Peru, wools to the vale of Cashmere, spices and perfumes to Arabia, that were furs to the vast region lying north of the St. Lawrence and the Lakes. A magnificent element of imperial power lay in the facility which the position of Canada gave for the monopoly of all this trade, which was then the coveted and disproportionate element in the commerce of the world. The most zealous restrictions and regulations to uphold the monopoly challenged the ingenuity of everyone to evade and defeat them. Settlers were forbidden to trade with the Indians, except as they sold their furs at a fixed price. They were forbidden to leave the settled country; and trade in the wilderness was forbidden. Noblemen forfeited their

rank by trade, and the controlling Jesuits were under the common prohibition. But everyone, governor and intendant, priests and soldiers, gentlemen and all, every officer of the government, while watching like a weasel every other officer, all got as deep as they could with hope of concealment into this illicit and contraband trade. Down the St. Lawrence and down the stream of the Ottawa the Indian canoes came paddling every year in fleets, with their freight of peltry. A cunning strife for the advantage of meeting them earliest on their way, or of meeting the wandering bands in the woods, and of trading there for their furs equally forestalled the law and the commercial sagacity that ought to have waited for the competition of a wider market. The allurements of traffic and zeal for the conversion of savages attracted the spirited adventurers and missionaries farther and farther up the river-courses and along the lakes into the recesses of the unexplored world, until they came upon the streams that pour into the valley of the Mississippi. Following up the stream of the Ottawa and Lake Nipissing, they came to the upper waters of Lake Huron and to the Sault St. Marie, so that Lake Erie was the last of the lakes discovered, and the country lying south of it the last explored by the French. At certain points which were known to be prolific fishing-grounds, and at others where game abounded, the Indians were accustomed to gather in great numbers and for long sojourns. To these places came the brave missionaries and established their missions. Such places were the missions of St. Esprit, of the Sault Ste. Marie, of St. Ignace, of Michilimacinac, and the head of Green Bay, where Father Allouez founded the mission of St. Francis Xavier. In the depths of the forest many of these men, pure-spirited and devoted, sought and found the seal of their consecration in fire and torture. The senses and the intellect stand appalled by the doom to which Père Brebeuf was consigned and abandoned. The idea of moral government was derided by the victory of fiends, which lighted the remote recesses of that forest theatre, while his spirit rose exultant because the prayer of his youth in distant France, and of all his life, was

answered, that God would accord him for reward the honor of martyrdom in the wilderness. Standing before him, young Lallement, lashed from head to foot in strips of bark and pitch, ready for the match, revived the memory of the living torches with which Nero lighted the Vatican gardens, that are now within the crab-like arms of St. Peter's. Under the forest the dark earth was dumb, and the stars above were silent, and through the mist of horror and of distance he must have seen the door of his humble home by the Seine, while faith struggled to meet its silent reproach of useless abandonment. But wherever these men went they carried the empire of the king and the supremacy of the Church. When they erected by the shore, or carved on the bark of trees the arms of France, they set above them the cross of the ecclesiastical dominion.

But Frontenac was the representative of his feudal master in the citadel of Quebec, and of the arms of his civil and political power. To extend the domain of France, to vindicate in the new world the pre-eminence of his king, to construct and cement the foundations of a grand empire, was the splendid dream of Frontenac's ambition. He thought, as the ecclesiastics also did, that the emigrant colonists and the Indians could be amalgamated and made the basic population of a civilized and industrial state. He also hoped to build up his own ruined fortunes and confirm them with wealth and distinction. To his mind here was a vast population and a vaster territory ready to be carved into seigniories; and to the eyes of the ecclesiastics there was a corresponding field for ecclesiastical ambition. An alliance of sympathy between him and La Salle, and a common interest in the illicit traffic of the time, gave him the reinforcement of views and ambition as wide and daring as his own. A military fortress at the very head of the St. Lawrence would manifestly extend and confirm the dominion of the king, and with equal certainty anticipate the fur trade in the secret interest of Frontenac and La Salle. By rapid action the governor built the formidable fort named Frontenac, where the city of Kingston stands. Already a large seigniory had been

given to La Salle, just above Montreal, at La Chine. Subsequently Fort Frontenac, with a wide surrounding territory, was also given to him as a seigniory. A little later, another great feudal seigniory, that marked the extension of French empire, was carved out and granted to La Salle, in the heart of Illinois, in the very heart of the continent, near the confluence of the greatest rivers, and at a point that seemed to dominate the springs and the courses of political and commercial supremacy.

The Northwest lies where the great valleys of the St. Lawrence and the Lakes, and the Mississippi, ascending, meet and merge into each other ; and bearing a similar relation to both, it geographically dominates that tremendous sweep from the Atlantic to the Gulf of Mexico. La Salle planted his Fort St. Louis of the Illinois on the summit of Starved Rock, to make it the centre of his colony in the midst of this region, central and commanding for all the vast extent of new French empire. A continuous French occupation of Illinois, since his settlement in 1679, marks La Salle as its founder. The old French town, Kaskaskia, was its capital in 1712, as Fort Chartres, a formidable fortress, was afterward. Lying partly at the head of the Lakes and the St. Lawrence, and partly at the head of the Mississippi, which receives the waters of thirty-five thousand miles of navigable affluents, walled in from the Atlantic slope by the Apalachian Mountains, a superior sentiment of political and social community of the Northwest with these great openings to the outer world is inevitable. The strength of this natural tendency is rarely perhaps appreciated, nor the extent to which it is now neutralized, and even overcome, by the effect of the great railways which cross the mountain barriers and run directly to the coast, particularly by that great artificial highway which comes to the bay of New York through the wonderful gateway of the Mohawk, where the beetling precipices barely make room for the passage of the railways, the telegraph, the canal, the highway, and the river, and that other one which comes to the same point by surmounting the Alleghenies in Pennsylvania. To thus rival and overcome the

influence of such vast natural waterways as those of the Lakes and the Mississippi, and consolidate the sentiment of a common country as against Alpine divisions, is an impressive evidence of the social and political force exerted by these artificial avenues of commerce.

It was the imperial political influence and power inherent in this position which was comprehended by Frontenac and La Salle. La Salle went up the St. Lawrence exploring a way to China. It is amusing at this day to find in the little Canadian town of La Chine, by the rapids, the memento of his geographical hallucination. Gradually but effectively the vision of Asia and of the opulence that lay in oriental commerce faded from the view of the explorers, and one of European dominion and feudal seigniories in the heart of the American continent shone in its place.

The emigrant founders of this new empire were not seeking escape from any obnoxious principles of government, or institutions of society of the country they came from. They had no purpose to improve or to change the church or the state, or to improve the general condition of the more burdened classes. On the other hand, there was no purpose specifically to extend any particular system of society. The law of France, *i.e.*, its political system, went to its colony as of course. But every man hoped under the same social framework to improve his own *relative* position in the form. From the noble to the peasant no one thought of improving the form of the state; but every one hoped for a better relative position in it. The peasant hoped to be a landed proprietor under conditions of comfort. The bourgeois trader, and the untitled gentleman who literally found no room for himself in France, hoped for titles and distinction in the new empire. They made no objection to seigniories, and, on the contrary, they hoped to become seigniors. The system, however, contemplated a vast underlying mass of subject people, upon whom should devolve the burdens of all servitude, and upon whose palpitating bodies the heels of all superior classes should, as in France, trample without resistance; and to this fortunate field were relegated, in the mind

of the peasant emigrant, the whole vast Indian population, to be turned toward industry and Christianized; and in the minds of the nobles and the priests and the gentlemen, the Indians and the peasant emigrants as well.

Now it would be incorrect to say that these people undertook and expected to transplant to the new world the imperial splendors of the empire of Louis XIV., and to reproduce there the glories of Versailles and the lordly life of the French nobility in the provinces. It is probable that through the mist of many intervening years their imagination may have seen the castellated forms of towers that served to illustrate the distinction of their posterity, and the ecclesiastical pinnacles that betokened the triumphs of their faith; but they knew that for themselves their homes were to be made in the midst of a wilderness which they must redeem; among savages whom they must reclaim or destroy. They knew their lives were doomed to exile, to peril unceasing, to toil without respite. Whatever might lie in the future, there was for them nothing of the splendors of French government or society. Meanwhile the tenant broke up the forest on the land held of his seignior, and watched from his cabin for the stealthy attack of savages; and the seignior, in his log château, held his courts and contentedly received his feudal homage and his feudal rental of farthings and poultry. But these were the poor and severe beginnings, as he felt assured, of an empire that might some day be splendid, wherein even the beginnings of rank were of value; and in the petty court at Montreal or Quebec the beggarly officers and nobles and gentry and traders, in decorations and costumes that might often forbid them to ridicule the gaudy bedeckings of the forest chiefs at a council fire, aped the manners and studied the distinctions that obtained in France.

So it is true that there was nothing noble or elevated in the movement itself, nor ennobling or dignifying in the motives or purpose of its participants. It was the most commonplace form of colonization, a mere swarming from an occupied to an empty field—from a field wherein by their utmost endeavor most men could barely hold their own in the

bitter and weary competition for livelihood, to one where the extreme of toil, hardship, and peril promised an ultimate security, competence, and independence. It is the nature of such movements, because they involve no element of revolt, to carry with them the law and social usage of the parent country. The movement is not founded in any new conception or scheme of government or law, but only in the personal interest of each participant, and so the old conditions go with the emigrant as of course, borne like the moraines on the backs of glaciers. It was so with Phœnician and Greek colonies, and Dorian and Corinthian colonies were Dorian and Corinthian themselves to the end. Such colonies therefore are duplex in character. From the stand-point of the empire or sovereignty which sends them out, they are the outposts of the empire, *the propugnacula imperii* of Cicero, a medium of extension of language and administration, and of imperial expansion. The movement is susceptible of becoming one of momentous historical importance and consequence. But looked at from the stand-point of the colonist, it is dignified by no moral or political purpose. It is wholly contained within the limits of the personal self-seeking of the individual emigrant.

It is this social and political freight, which is thus borne without conscious purpose by currents of immigration, which gives historical importance to the French establishment in Canada, and its movements into the Northwest. The emigrants exhibited the hardihood and endurance common to all who are pioneers in a new country. The missionaries illustrated that zeal for their cause and that faith in their religion which is everywhere found among the martyrs to religious belief and the champions of an ecclesiastical system. These, admirable as they are, are the commonplaces of history after all, like the courage and the grand exploits of soldiers; but the chance which existed that the feudal conditions of continental Europe might be actually established on this continent, and on the very banks of the Illinois, is a matter that we may well pause and make the subject of reflection.

A seigniory in the time of Frontenac represented the

aggregate abuse of all the privilege and prerogative acquired by the chiefs since the Frankish conquest. With the changes of society every privilege had been preserved and every public burden evaded. The nobles held all the wealth of the country, but the burden of taxes was rolled off upon the toiling populations who worked the lands and made the highways, and had nothing left but broken spirits when their work was done. The seignior lived as a prince among the people who had once been serfs. He had his precedence, and his ancestral tombs in the church; he held his courts of high and low jurisdiction, appointed petty officers within his realm, and enforced his laws by his prison and often by his gibbet. To him went forfeited and confiscated property, all property found, and waifs and wrecks; and a share of everything produced by the labor of his people, and fines on every change of title. Tolls and contributions and monopolies were a torment and an oppression. He established his scales, his markets, and his mill, his oven, wine-press, and slaughter-house, and to these all must come with their tolls. Such were the seigniories granted and established in New France. Frontenac was gravely rebuked in 1672 by Colbert for the first step toward a recognition of the estates and the institution of a municipal government for Quebec. "You are always," he said, "to follow, in the government of Canada, the forms in use here; and since our kings have long regarded it as good for their service not to convoke the states of the kingdom, in order, perhaps, to abolish insensibly this ancient usage, you on your part should very rarely, or to speak more correctly, never give a corporate form to the inhabitants of Canada. You should even, as the colony strengthens, suppress gradually the office of the syndic who presents petitions in the name of the inhabitants; for it is well that each should speak for himself and none for all."¹ A writer upon the "Constitutional History of Canada" illustrates the social situation in the following statement:

"At the time of the Conquest [1763], the seigniors and the peasants constituted two important factors in the problem

¹ Parkman's *Frontenac*, p. 20.

of a new government. The seigniors were entitled, according to the code of feudalism, to erect courts and to preside in them as judges. They could administer what was known as '*haute, moyenne et basse justice.*' They could take cognizance of all crimes committed within their jurisdiction, except murder and treason. If they did not, in the French period, exercise their tyrannous rights over the lives, limbs, and liberties of their vassals, it was because they were too poor to organize the machinery of seigniorial courts, build dungeons, and retain jailers and executioners. That it was this power to crush, which was wanting to the seigniors, and not the spirit, may be seen in their complaint of the hardship of not being permitted, under British rule, to exercise their feudal jurisdiction. . . . The feeling of the peasants toward their seigniors was fear, not affection. This experience, however, is as wide as the circuit of Europe, and as old as feudalism. In the injuries done him by his seignior the Canadian peasant could only suffer; redress he had none. The people who were not 'noble,' and who were more than nine hundred and ninety-nine out of a thousand, were well pleased that the battering-ram of the Common Law had broken down the fortress of unjust privilege, which in the period of French domination had walled in the noble from the consequences of his acts."¹

Such, then, was an American seigniori in point of its legal establishment. The torture of the rack was of common occurrence in the administration of criminal law in Canada.² It has been found agreeable by writers to depict in pleasing pictures the Arcadian simplicity and contented peace of the French and Indian colonies in Illinois, led by Père Gravier, Marest, and others, to the vicinity of Kaskaskia and Old Fort Chartres, with their careless and idle lives in their white-washed and vine-clad cottages;³ and literature is beginning to throw over the indolent security of these people that picturesque aspect of peace which is illustrated by the

¹ Watson, Constitutional History of Canada, pp. 11-14.

² Watson, Constitutional History of Canada, p. 25, *Note*.

³ Breese, History of Illinois, pp. 195-200, 223-231.

antitheses of fortresses grass-grown, and of birds nesting in the very embrasures of the cannon. But this was because only that part of the machinery of this political and social system was in operation which they controlled and operated themselves, and the iron hand of superior power had not yet been felt among them when they passed under the sovereignty of England. They had no Anglo-Saxon comprehension of political rights, or idea of participation in public affairs; no Anglo-Saxon capacity to take it when offered. Upon these subjects they were perfectly indifferent, and utterly without aspiration or sense of responsibility.¹ They illustrated all the characteristics of our Southern African people since their enfranchisement. Fortunately it is unnecessary

¹ "In the year 1818 the whole people numbered about forty-five thousand souls. Some two thousand of these were the descendants of the old French settlers in the villages of Kaskaskia, Prairie du Rocher, Prairie du Pont, Cahokia, Peoria, and Chicago. These people had fields in common for farming, and farmed, built houses, and lived in the style of the peasantry in old France a hundred and fifty years ago. They had made no improvements in anything, nor had they adopted any of the improvements made by others. They were the descendants of those French people who had first settled the country, more than a hundred and fifty years before, under Lasalle, Iberville, and the priests Alvarez, Rasles, Gravier, Pinet, Marest, and others, and such as subsequently joined them from New Orleans and Canada; and they now formed all that remained of the once proud empire which Louis XIV., king of France, and the regent Duke of Orleans, had intended to plant in the Illinois country. The original settlers had many of them intermarried with the native Indians, and some of the descendants of these partook of the wild, roving disposition of the savage, united to the politeness and courtesy of the Frenchman. In the year 1818, and for many years before, the crews of keel-boats on the Ohio and Mississippi Rivers were furnished from the Frenchmen of this stock. Many of them spent a great part of their time, in the spring and fall seasons, in paddling their canoes up and down the rivers and lakes in the river bottoms, on hunting excursions in pursuit of deer, fur, and wild fowl, and generally returned home well loaded with skins, fur, and feathers, which were with them the great staple of trade. Those who stayed at home contented themselves with cultivating a few acres of Indian corn, in their common fields, for bread, and providing a supply of prairie hay for their cattle and horses. No genuine Frenchman in those days ever wore a hat, cap, or coat. The heads of both men and women were covered with Madras cotton handkerchiefs, which were tied around, in the fashion of night-caps. For an upper covering of the body the men wore a blanket garment, called a 'capot' (pronounced cappel), with a cap to it at the back of the neck, to be drawn over the head for a protection in cold weather, or in warm weather to be thrown back on the shoulders in the fashion of a cape. Notwith-

to explore the outlines of the great dominion that was given to the seignior of Fort St. Louis of the Illinois, for the present proprietor, even of Starved Rock itself, will search in vain the abstract of his title for the slightest trace of the great seigniory of Robert Cavalier de La Salle.

The other movement came upon our coast at the shallow bay of Plymouth. There came into New England then not only the Pilgrims, but the constitution of the Mayflower.

An iceberg drifting in the sea is not more cleanly parted from its original than the community in the cabin of the Mayflower was from the political society it left behind. Conceive

standing this people had been so long separated by an immense wilderness from civilized society, they still retained all the suavity and politeness of their race. And it is a remarkable fact that the roughest hunter and boatman among them could at any time appear in a ball-room, or other polite and gay assembly, with the carriage and behavior of a well-bred gentleman. The French women were remarkable for the sprightliness of their conversation and the grace and elegance of their manners. And the whole population lived lives of alternate toil, pleasure, innocent amusement, and gayety.

"Their horses and cattle, for want of proper care and food for many generations, had degenerated in size, but had acquired additional vigor and toughness, so that a French pony was a proverb for strength and endurance. These ponies were made to draw, sometimes one alone, sometimes two together, one hitched before the other, to the plough, or to carts made entirely of wood, the bodies of which held about double the contents of the body of a common wheelbarrow. The oxen were yoked by the horns instead of the neck, and in this mode were made to draw the plough and cart. Nothing like reins were ever used in driving; the whip of the driver, with a handle about two feet, and a lash two yards long, stopped or guided the horse as effectually as the strongest reins.

"The French houses were mostly built of hewn timber, set upright in the ground, or upon plates laid upon a wall, the intervals between the upright pieces being filled with stone and mortar. Scarcely any of them were more than one story high, with a porch on one or two sides, and sometimes all around, with low roofs extending with slopes of different steepness from the comb in the centre to the lowest part of the porch. These houses were generally placed in gardens, surrounded by fruit-trees of apples, pears, cherries, and peaches; and in the villages each enclosure for a house and garden occupied a whole block or square, or the greater part of one. Each village had its Catholic church and priest. The church was the great place of gay resort on Sundays and holidays, and the priest was the adviser and director and companion of all his flock. The people looked up to him with affection and reverence, and he upon them with compassion and tenderness."—FORD'S HISTORY OF ILLINOIS, pp. 35-38.

as sharply as one can of the cleavage that marked the separation and he will hardly exaggerate it. The legal fiction of extra-territorial jurisdiction was put in practical abeyance. Within the ship floated a political fragment broken off from the people of England. With no charter or incorporation ; with no authority from the English sovereign ; with no grant of territory from any pope or king ; with a ship hired solely to convey them across the Atlantic—the little people rode the waters a moving and unorganized assembly. Within the shelter of Cape Cod they framed a political organization as original as if they were the only inhabitants of the earth. A collective body of individuals, by virtue of the *sovereignty* which inhered in them, *created themselves* a civil body politic for government. Here were declared the principles of sovereignty in the people, of civil liberty, of justice and equality in laws, and the subordination of each person to the “general good.” There was no reservation of the laws of England. They understood that they were erecting a new state upon independent and original foundations, for the action was thought to be made necessary by an inclination which developed in certain of the number to assert and use the absolute liberty of individuals who had passed out from under any civil government whatever. But this new state imparted to its law an original sanction derived from sovereignty within itself, and not from an extension of the sovereignty of England. The act was deliberate and can bear no other construction.¹ By the effect of this constitution feudalism, with its tenures, entails, and primogeniture, was extinct among this people. Mr. Bancroft says it “was the birth of popular constitutional liberty,” and that “in the cabin of the Mayflower humanity recovered its rights.”² It is true ; and by one act all the constitutional history of the states of Europe, from Pompey the Great to John Hampden, fell out, and the free principles of the old Roman constitution survived in the constitution of the Mayflower.

¹ Palfrey, *History of New England*, vol. i., p. 164, *note* 1. Goodwin, *The Pilgrim Republic*, p. 62.

² *History of U. S.*, vol. i., p. 310.

This isolation from the associations of the old world, which was intended by the Pilgrims, makes them the exponent of a peculiar organization of society. They left behind them something more than three thousand miles of barren and pathless sea. They left behind the political system and the ecclesiastical system, with their combinations and their commingled traditions, which were rooted in the general thought of the communities they abandoned. They had to disengage themselves from this mental complication. They had to make a break with the past. They left the old communities to work out their results in England by the more or less violent processes of social evolution ; but they needed a new planet or a fresh wilderness for their own scheme of social polity unentangled with antique traditions that tended against them. In this light the great Puritan colonization of 1830 contained elements of a different character, and was not of equal dignity with that of the Pilgrims at Plymouth. While greater in mass and far exceeding in all the elements that constitute social and political power ; while the details of its turbulent and picturesque history have, because Massachusetts has furnished its literature, overshadowed the consistent and uncomplicated annals of Plymouth, nevertheless, to a degree that cannot be ignored and ought not to be obscured, it had the commonplace character of ordinary colonizing movements. There was not the same sharp-cut cleavage from old-world conditions. Like all the colonizing movements of the world, except that of Plymouth, it carried upon its back the commonplace freight of the traditional law and habit of thought, and social usage of the parent country. The basic purpose of the movement was identical with that of Plymouth—to find liberty and a new state in a new world—and the difference between Puritan and Non-conformist and Separatist counted for nothing. The appearance of church loyalty, which expediency had maintained, dissolved instantly under the independence of the new community and the example and counsel of Plymouth.¹ A living fire from the altar of Calvin glowed in the souls of all alike. These were not ruined and debauched

¹ Doyle, *Puritan Colonies*, vol. i., p. 95.

noblemen, nor penniless "gentlemen," hangers-on of the great, and vagabonds by inheritance; nor hunters of fortune or glory, nor the refuse of the seaports or the farms, nor the criminals of the state. They belonged to the manliest and most intellectually accomplished part of the inhabitants of England. They worthily represented the best heart and brain and character and scholarship of England, the material of the Parliaments of Elizabeth, of Cromwell's army, the associates and friends of Milton and Algernon Sidney. Frontenac called them "genuine old parliamentarians," and "the rebels and old republican leaven of Cromwell."¹ They included graduates of the great universities of England, and among them men like Thomas Hooker and like John Cotton, who abandoned the stateliest parish church in England for the primitive meeting-house of the Massachusetts colony.² The participants in this movement came of a set purpose. They spurned the mines and the fountains of Indian fable. They knew history, and they held a philosophy of history by which the ultimate goal was not the extension of any form of government, nor of any ecclesiastical system, but the establishment of whatever would best develop the faculties of every individual under its influence. The end of history with them was the development of man—not of a government nor of a church. It is said that "they were animated, like a Greek colony, with the desire to reproduce the political life of the country they were leaving."³ That was Greek, but with deference I think it was neither Puritan nor Pilgrim. They intended to leave England behind them. What of Stuart or of Tudor or of bishops and archbishops did Standish and Winslow, or Dudley or Cotton desire to bring to the wilderness? It was the brooding revolution, it was the soul of Cromwell that came with them. Avoiding the intermediate processes they proposed to make the perfected results of the revolution the starting-point for New England. So much was common to them all. But with the Puritan influx of 1630 came also a freight of old-time tradition and personal and class ambition

¹ Parkman, *Frontenac*, 283, 295.

² Palfrey, *History of New England*, p. 368.

³ Doyle, *Puritan Colonies*, vol. i., p. 101.

that was pregnant with mischief and fatal to the peace of Massachusetts. With the very first movement there was borne in an oligarchical spirit that gave the colony no rest. It was civil and it was clerical. The leading men came, with the idea of establishing rank and class distinction and prerogative.¹ There were to be gentlemen and noblemen and the commoners and the clergy. It is incontestible that at the beginning hostility to democracy governed the purposes of the dominant men, civil and clerical. In their interest the limitation of the capacity to hold office or to vote in elections to the membership of the churches disfranchised the very great majority of the people from the outset. In 1676 five-sixths of the people remained outside the church and therefore disfranchised.² It is a marvel how the destruction of the hierarchy has resulted in the exaltation of the individual priest in his congregation. The men of better descent, wealth, and influence determined to establish by law in Massachusetts some privileged class. What has been happily called the "Brahminism" and the "Brahmin caste" of New England stands on a very different basis.³ When confronted by the antagonism of the popular mass they appealed to the arbitrament of the ministers or the elders, and the decision never failed to support them. Nothing of this was in the little Plymouth state; but this old-world freight of social tradition and habit was borne into and deposited in the midst of the colony of Massachusetts Bay. The stream of democratic principles, to which the great majority was loyal, and which was reinforced by the example and influence of Plymouth, rose round and against this alien mass and finally engulfed it. From 1629 to 1690 the struggle with it was unremitted. This foreign element is the source of all the indiscriminate reproach which has been heaped upon the Puritans. It was like the plunder of Jericho in Joshua's army. There could be no prosperity till it was out and the men were dead. All colonial New England has had to bear the stigma of prin-

¹ Doyle, *Pur. Col.*, vol. i., pp. 104, 105; Johnston, *Connecticut*, pp. 64, 67.

² Johnston, *Connecticut*, p. 66.

³ Holmes, *Elsie Venner*, vol. i., p. 1; 20 *Brownson's Quar. Rev.*, 421.

ciples it repudiated and finally cast out. There is a strenuous effort constantly made to defend New England against charges of social and church tyranny and persecution. There is no burden on New England to defend herself at all. These things were never among her principles. They were local to Massachusetts Bay. They were not developed in Plymouth nor in Connecticut. They were the self-assertion of a foreign and extraneous element; of a parasite that fastened upon the state till it was thrown off. It was as hostile, and as incompatible with the genuine spirit of the Pilgrim and Puritan colonization, as the schemes and policy of Frontenac and La Salle would have been. No more unique figures loom out of the colonial past than those of the gloomy fanatic John Norton and the savage inquisitor John Endicott. Their pitiless souls, regaled by the incense of blood and torment, grow more repulsive as they recede in time. But Endicott and Norton, and Dudley and Wilson, do not represent the original spirit or the permanent influence of the Puritan colony nor its historical contribution to the future. They belong to an alien element that came on the ships as a stowaway, and those who overthrew this monster of their time are the exponents of New England, which was substantially homogeneous afterward, but not before. When we speak of the Puritan we should think of him as he stood, less Endicott and less Norton and Dudley; speak of him as he stood by the side and with the sympathy of Miles Standish, who was no narrow churchman, not even a church-member. The annals of Massachusetts would be vastly fewer than they are if there were taken from them all that pertains to the struggle to get rid of that un-republican freight of individual rank, of class distinction, of clerical abuse of position and influence, and scheming for dominion in political affairs; just as the annals of the republic would be less if the long struggle to throw out the un-republican element of slave tyranny had never arisen to be narrated. The long struggle with slavery was an episode, an incidental controversy. It was but a clearing of the deck that the republic might proceed upon her career to work out her contribution to universal history. In like manner all

New England had to wait until Massachusetts had freed herself from her incubus and brought herself back to the original starting-point of Plymouth and Connecticut, so that all might move on together.

In Massachusetts the disfranchised majority, which represented the opposition, had at its side the steady reinforcement of the sentiment and opinion, and of the consistent example and tranquil prosperity of the Plymouth community. Without the example of Plymouth's prosperity the Dorchester Adventurers would never have developed the colony of Massachusetts Bay, and without the example of its steady and consistent administration of civil affairs the social and political character of Massachusetts might have differed widely from the actual result. The Pilgrims and Puritans withdrew themselves from England to America in advance of the storm of the revolution, and the colony of Connecticut had its origin in a similar movement of protest and secession from the alien principles and narrow dominance of Endicott and his party. There can be no doubt of the nature of the divergence that caused the complete secession of the three corporate towns of Watertown, Newtown, and Dorchester, under the leadership of Hooker, and their withdrawal to Connecticut. Perhaps they felt it easier to take to the wilderness again than to remain in the midst of an unanticipated and unwholesome contention for the rectification of Massachusetts. But the movement under Hooker was upon the same plane as that of the Mayflower. In both, men bent their thought to the elementary principles of society. They studied the application of these to practical administration. They framed a scheme of social order, to be upheld by the normal action of every individual, each in his place, from the bottom of the state to the top. The men most reverent to God, and the most scriptural-minded, discovered that the antique political principle of the pagan states of Greece and Rome—the sovereignty within the state, the Delphian *rhetra* to Lycurgus: "Let the power rest with the people," the liberty of the individual citizen—were less atheistic and more elevating than the theocratic principle that put the symbol of

ecclesiastical supremacy above the arms of the king in the forests of the Hurons and the Ottawas. But the manner in which these men, without any close example, made it the vital principle of all organized society, and ordered upon it their town, their church, and their state, and passed it on to ripen into the formula of "government of the people, by the people and for the people," is one of those wonderful things that, occurring in history, seem the result of some extra-human inspiration. They found out such modes of giving it effect as have shown that the individual freedom of small democracies, and the patriotism of small independent communities can be securely expanded upon the broadest planes of national and federal life.

During all the time of the Augean cleansing in Massachusetts the principles of the Plymouth colony were represented and maintained by Connecticut. All the distinctive principles of the first constitution of Connecticut were expressly or by necessary implication in the constitution of the Mayflower. The overshadowing and final absorption of Plymouth left them to the leadership and maintenance of Connecticut.

The little municipality known as the New England town developed itself almost as a matter of course in Plymouth and in Massachusetts. It cannot be necessary to explore the obscure *tun* of the German forests for its original suggestion. The municipal citizenship of the Italian cities survived the wreck of the empire and the succeeding centuries of intellectual imprisonment. The idea of corporate political organization with election of representatives became thoroughly ingrained in the English mind. The conception was imported from the civil law. When it became necessary in an isolated community of slender numbers to frame some municipal society, the form, cast in the mould of the English mind, would be sure to take on some such outline. These towns are found wherever New England emigration has gone. When one sees how the local citizenship of Italian cities survived into the renaissance of thought and civic life, he may well believe that these minute political organizations on their

basis of popular sovereignty, these social and political molecules will be henceforth absolutely indestructible. If so, then, as a security for the free conditions under which men may best develop, they are a priceless contribution to the chain of universal history.

Wherever subsequent migration carried the people of Connecticut, there went this form of the New England town. In Connecticut the towns created the state and became the source from which the state derived its powers.¹ This was also true in Vermont, which was the immediate offspring of Connecticut, as Connecticut was of Massachusetts, and at a later period has surpassed Connecticut in the reinforcement of these primal principles. The towns organized the government of Vermont,² which separately declared its own independence of Great Britain, and erected itself into a free and independent state, and so maintained itself for nearly fifteen years, at first under the name of New Connecticut. This constitution of the state by the towns furnished the type and the principle of organization of the Federal Union. Wherever this polity was extended, there went hand in hand with it the cause of secular education. Taken for all in all, the movement of New England colonization was one of such intellectual and moral dignity as makes all the other colonizing movements of antiquity or of our race commonplace and mean. Before dwellings or subsistence had been adequately provided, first in Massachusetts and afterward in Connecticut, public and private benefaction laid the foundations of the two great universities of New England; and immediately upon that basis was founded the common school, and it is nobly said that neither poverty nor social caste has ever in New England barred the road to education or to public honor, nor has ignorance ever been an excuse for personal degradation or for crime.³

The object of the New England colonists was not to extend dominion for England, but to establish their own state. The Puritans had been sixty years on the coast when the

¹ Johnston, Connecticut, p. 62.

² Vermont State Papers, pp. 65-73, 79.

³ Palfrey, History of New England.

portentous comet of 1680, so ominous to Increase Mather at Boston, was watched by La Salle on the Illinois River on his return from the Mississippi. The vigilance and enterprise of the French had passed up the Lakes and down to the Gulf, and had prepared to check the English colonists at the gate of the Mohawk and at the head of the Ohio, while they were still confined to their settlements along the coast and had not crossed the Apalachian chain. They devoted themselves not to expansion but to establishment, and the confirmation of their security. But there was a vigor in the action by which threatening Indian tribes were suppressed that augured power in the future. It was a profound and lasting quiet that followed the overthrow of the Pequots. Near Fort Miami La Salle found some warriors of King Philip who had fled from the Puritan vengeance, and who joined his party. It must have been a stunning blow that sent those savages whirling through the wilderness, till they brought up dazed and tamed near the shores of Lake Michigan. It seems unexampled, except by the flight of that fragment of people found on the coast of Africa, near the columns of Hercules, who claimed to be Canaanites, expelled by the assaults of Joshua, the son of Nun.

Unqualified laudation bears always with itself the evidence of ill-digested facts and of premature judgment; and perhaps an unwarranted glamour has been thrown over the subject of schools and of secular learning in the colonial days. But the conception of it as a vital part of the civic policy, as a feature of the civil state, was never clouded for an instant. Always it remains true, that wherever the genuine influence of New England has gone there you find the widest tolerance of opinion, and that the monsters of superstition are one after another slain by the steady and free development of education. The intellectual fibres of all the world, two centuries and a half ago, were puckered and strained by the astringent properties of theological speculation, and an inheritance of theological dogma. To expect to find a man of the seventeenth or eighteenth centuries standing upon the higher intellectual plane of some more emancipated men

of the nineteenth, and surveying their wider horizon, is a delusion, and to some extent involves a snare. The extent to which the system of teaching, of conferring actual information and accurate knowledge of particular subjects, was carried by the common schools among the farming people and the ordinary classes, and also the real extent of what was called "learning" among physicians and clergymen and the college men, is usually greatly exaggerated, and from a modern point of view it cannot seem very great. It was narrow. It was limited by the resources and habits of thought that belonged to the times. Grammar, mathematics, and geography were not carried very far. There was more of literature, though books were few, and of theology there was more than enough. There was no skill of engineering to build bridges, and but little of the natural sciences—chemistry, anatomy, physiology—and these conditions fettered the study of clergymen and of physicians. But the study of the civil and common law, of history and of the regulations of society and government were opened to the highest development of thought, and the intellect of men was trained on these in public affairs as well as on the abstruse questions of metaphysics and theology. With voting went debating in that school of statecraft the town-meeting, and discussion of all the civil polity of the state. But limited and narrow as the learning taught in the schools of New England may now be thought to have been, the contrast between the relative estimates in New England and elsewhere of its importance, and between its abundance and the destitution of the rest of the country, represented an immeasurable abyss. It is this difference by contrast, not the absolute extent of learning in New England, which made her people and her policy so conspicuous in this regard. Compared, however, with the other colonies the extent of it was prodigious, and, what is more important, it was universally diffused. Public sentiment everywhere demanded its diffusion as the first condition of society, and to the utmost extent that the slender resources of the times and the country would allow. It quickened and enlightened mental activity everywhere. It gave intelligence

to guide and direct the force of individuals and communities. It furnished the elements of reason and judgment to opinions. That it should be adequate to overcome all narrowness and bigotry was not to be expected. That it should cut men abruptly away from their intellectual inheritance of thought, or lift them out of their inevitable environment, was of course impossible. But many things are charged to narrowness and to bigotry, which had their foundation in the most comprehensive ideas of social and political emancipation. It may be convenient enough for the adherents of various forms of ecclesiastical organization to attribute the resistance of New England to Episcopacy and Presbyterianism, as times then were, to bigotry, but it is false. It was liberality and liberty, not bigotry or narrowness. It was the protest against being narrowed. The Church of England and the Scotch Presbyterian represented to them the very abomination of ecclesiasticism, from which they had recoiled and fled. They wanted no ecclesiastical organization to confuse loyalty to the organization with fidelity to religion, or to superintend their thought upon any subject or dominate their modes of public education. They were unable to point to any time or country in which the great mass of the population were improved in their intellectual and political condition by the control or influence of any ecclesiastical system whatever.

At all times a somewhat equivocal policy disguised the real determination of all the colonists in the matter of absolute independence both of the king and the ecclesiastical power of England. In their own hearts the settlers carried a habitual sentiment of independence, which was at variance sometimes with their immediate policy and with the formal declarations of their public documents. A tendency to assume an independent sovereignty was always active in New England from the hour the Mayflower compact was signed. It asserted itself strongly in the league of the four colonies, and was continually visible in the conduct of public affairs. A war of independence was inevitable from the first political act of the Pilgrims. It was sure to come. John Adams said : "The authority of Parliament was never generally acknowl-

edged in America." Burdette wrote to Laud in 1637, "The colonists aim not at new discipline, but at sovereignty." An intelligent people, bred to a degree of liberty elsewhere unknown, trained by peril and hardship to self-reliance and the use of arms, were little likely ever to be tamed again to subjection to a distasteful and distant power. To guard against this tendency, which would be strengthened by the growth of the colonies into the Northwest regions, still more remote, England proposed to close that vast domain against population, and impeded and prohibited the settlement of the Northwest. At one time it was considered, with the same end in view, whether Canada should not be restored to the French dominion; and finally, by the Quebec Act in 1774, on the basis chiefly of the French settlement and occupation in Illinois, it was intended to permanently detach the Northwest from the Shore Colonies and link it with Canada, so that its permanent affiliations should be with the St. Lawrence basin and not with the Atlantic slope. Only the Revolution broke this purpose. The Northwest was conquered from England and the savages, as it had been from France and the savages. Such was the stake of the Northwest in the Revolution. Nevertheless there was little association and less affiliation between New England and the other English colonies before the events leading to the Revolution brought them into combination. "Till the time of the Boston Port Bill," says Palfrey, "Massachusetts and Virginia, the two principal English colonies, had with each other scarcely more relations of acquaintance, business, mutual influence, or common action, than either of them had with Jamaica or Quebec." But from the moment their action in concert began, the principles of the Plymouth constitution were asserted and became dominant. The Northwest territory grew out of a request of Congress that States would cede their western lands to the government to aid a fund for the payment of the public debt; and in 1787 Congress passed an ordinance for the government of the inhabitants of that territory. By the influence of New England, through this unexampled secondary constitution, the territory of the Northwest steadily unified itself

and became as distinct a historical unit within the republic as New England was among the colonies. The *first* provision of the Ordinance of 1787 established entire religious freedom ; its *second*, those "just and equal" principles which are usually inserted in bills of rights ; the *third* provided for the management and support of schools ; and the *sixth*, that there should be no slavery—nothing but freedom—within the boundaries of the vast territory which is now Ohio, Indiana, Michigan, Wisconsin, and Illinois. This was made by New England men a condition upon which alone they stood ready to purchase five million acres of this public domain.¹ No argument or exposition can make more obvious the Mayflower character of the Ordinance of 1787, and it is no empty figure of rhetoric to say that when it went into force Frontenac was supplanted, and Miles Standish, the captain of the Pilgrims, had set his feet in victory upon the territory of the Northwest.

By one other important avenue the New England commonwealths have entered upon the Northwest. These colonists were Englishmen. The entire period of their emigration, commencing in 1620, hardly extended forty years. A singular sense of satisfaction in their ethnic identity, and a corresponding sharp dislike of foreigners was always aggressively active. By laws and social sentiment and the coldest inhospitality they discouraged their coming even as servants. They hated Irish and Frenchmen and prelacy under every form uncompromisingly, and were well content that Dutchmen should keep as far away as they would. Naturalization was made difficult and inconvenient. Their great pride of race grew with inherited enmity and suspicion under the influence of their controversies. While the glories of England were theirs also, the dislike of foreigners came to include her nevertheless, as soon as the spirit of liberty and the purpose of independence defined itself clearly in an issue of arms. At the close of the Revolution and at the opening of this century, and long afterward, the people of New England remained, perhaps, the purest part of the English race, multi-

¹ William F. Poole, *North Am. Rev.*, April, 1876, Ordinance of 1787.

plying in the close seclusion of their own borders, and having little communication with the outside world. This characteristic of the New England people, made conspicuous among the other colonies, was a principal cause there of a bitterness of sentiment and political angularity toward them that frequently found more or less definite expression.¹ The movements of this people were confined, until a very modern period, entirely within their own borders; but of one part of this territory there is a peculiar record. The native Algonquin population, never dense, was disposed along the sea-coast, with an occasional interior tribe not far from the sea. Beyond the Hudson lay the permanent abode of the Mohawks and their allied tribes, but Western Massachusetts and Vermont, with Northern New Hampshire, appear to have been void of any human occupation. Moreover, no indications suggest the presence there, as in some other regions, of any more ancient people. No mounds, no ancient groves, no fragments of antique pottery or primitive weapons speak of primitive races. "It is a long way," it is said, "from a cromlech to Westminster Abbey," but there are no more traces of cromlechs than of cathedrals. A few arrow-heads, and relics that signify the occasional passing of savages, out for hunting or for war, are the only things that check the bound of the imagination to the belief that in all this vast

¹ Lodge, Eng. Col., 407, 474. Palfrey, Hist. of New Eng., Preface.

"The next wish of this traveller will be to know whence came all these people? They are a mixture of English, Scotch, Irish, French, Dutch, Germans, and Swedes. From this promiscuous breed that race now called Americans has arisen. *The eastern provinces must indeed be excepted as being the unmixed descendants of Englishmen.* I have heard many wish they had been more intermixed also; for my part, I am no wisher, and *I think it much better as it has happened. They exhibit a most conspicuous figure in this great and variegated picture*; they, too, enter for a great share in the pleasing perspective displayed in these thirteen provinces. I know it is fashionable to reflect on them, but I respect them for what they have done; for the accuracy and wisdom with which they have settled their territory; for the decency of their manners; for their early love of letters; their ancient college, the first in this hemisphere; for their industry; which to me who am but a farmer, is the criterion of everything."—CRÉVECŒUR, *THE AMERICAN FARMER*, p. 48.

See also *Travels through the United States, by the Duke de la Rochefoucault-Liancourt*, ii., p. 214. London ed., 1799.

region of forest and streams no human being ever had abode from the beginning of time till it was occupied by the people of Connecticut. But for nearly a century and a half a shadow of unutterable horror held back the multitude of brave and enterprising colonists who gathered at the very border of the fated domain. Year after year the forest fruits fell unheeded and the foliage decked the earth in colors of gold and red that matched the imperial splendor of cathedral transepts. Through successive seasons the streams bounded in the sun and froze into the silence of death, and the fertile lands that might have blossomed with harvests lay dull and hopeless under the stars and the sun; for over them brooded the terror that was the ally of the old lion, Frontenac, and of his successors who held sway at Quebec. In all the wars of France and England the American colonies had a frightful participation. The Indian allies of the Canadian French were hurled not only upon the Iroquois tribes that lay within the gateway of the continent formed by the Mohawk valley, but upon the settlements of New England. The atrocities of Deerfield and Haverhill overawed the disposition to settle in undefended places; and to invade the region where these murderous bands were prowling was to enter into the shadow of inevitable destruction. The customary route of Indian foray through the wilderness was to follow the frozen water-courses, with such portages as were necessary to pass from one to another. The Canadian savages came by Lake Champlain to streams entering it from the East, and thence crossed over to the Connecticut; or from Lake George by the portage to the Hudson, and thence up the Hoosac to its head-waters, and over the mountains to the Deerfield River. The old Indian trail runs there almost exactly over the great railway tunnel. By whichever route, the war parties came at last upon the settlements through the narrow gateways of Southern Vermont, and at any hour their plumed and painted shapes might emerge from the forest. Such a terror brooded over this region till the final conquest of Canada in 1760; but in the meanwhile the Taghconic valley of Western Vermont and of Western Massachusetts was

like the valley of Esdraelon, the passage-way of armies. The colonial soldiers that engaged in the French and Indian wars about Lake Champlain and Lake George passed forth and back through this valley, the home afterward of Ethan Allen and of Warner, and came to know the most fruitful part of New England; and one of them left the memorial of his passage in the original foundation of Williams College. As soon as it ceased to be swept by war parties of Canadian savages the people of Connecticut filled it with their populous and prosperous settlements.¹ I have sketched and dwelt upon this peculiar, and not too familiar, course of New England settlement because of the enormous proportional part borne by the people of this region, in the present century, in the emigration from New England to the territory of the Northwest. Like their predecessors of Plymouth and Connecticut, individual freedom was their civil corner-stone; the church with them hardly preceded the school; and none but a free-man ever breathed in the air of Vermont.²

There was almost no emigration from New England prior to the close of the Revolutionary War, nor was it considerable till the beginning of the present century. But in 1840 about half a million people born there were living in other States. Forty years later nothing was more conspicuous than the impress of New England upon the States of the old Northwest through the presence of her people. In proportion to population, by far the largest number is from Vermont, and the least from New Hampshire. Of the native New England population in the Northwest, in 1880, three-fourths were from the three States of Massachusetts, Vermont, and Connecticut; Vermont contributing about three-fourths as many as Massachusetts, and Connecticut less than two-thirds as many as Vermont. The part this emigration has borne in the political and social development of the Northwest, in which the remnants of French occupation are disappearing, is too familiar to be made the subject of present discussion.

¹ Thompson, *History of Vermont*, Part 2, p. 16; Hall, *Early History of Vermont*, p. 4.

² Legislative Act of October 30, 1786. Selectmen of Windsor vs. Jacob, 2 Tyler Rep., 194-199. 29 N. E. Reg., 247. Jennings, *Memorials of a Century*, p. 336.

And now, if, as Socrates said to Protagoras, we had the result standing in human shape before us, would it condemn and deride us, or could the Puritan scholars silence that by demonstration that some permanent good has been confirmed by them to human society? If this shape should interrogate them, they could say that under their principles of unfettered thought and education there have been developed the most elevating and hopeful conditions for the general good under which man ever lived; and that it is proven that any ecclesiastical or political institution that cannot face the freest thought and widest education is certainly charged with mischief for society. But the most sinister and shocking thing in the world is that horrid sneer which the satirists have passed down the generations of man, at the infirmity that has sacrificed to the silliest vanities and most selfish ambitions every guarantee for the survival or growth of any good. It is well for us to consider in what subtle ways great changes come about. It is a fact that when the common school was founded notwithstanding the clerical tyranny of the separate ministers there was no ecclesiasticism in New England. There was religion, absorbing and profound, and the spirit of worship and the abuse of the influence of the individual minister. But there was no ecclesiasticism. There was no organization framed not merely to administer religion, but also to formulate creeds and to regulate thought by discipline and its own rules. For more than fifty years the celebration of marriage was permitted to none but the civil magistrates. The sects whose tendencies were to concentration of authority and to discipline never rooted well, but found a cold and reluctant soil in New England. A system of independent churches conserved among the people the purity of religious faith and simplicity of service, and equally defended the independence of the mind. There was no organization to confuse itself and its regulations with the religion it represented, and inculcate an absorbing obligation of loyalty to the organization simply.¹ If there had been, the principles of New England education would have been different from what they were. This

¹ Palfrey, *History of New England*, pp. 298-408.

shows under what sunlight our educational principles and the Ordinance of 1787 were born, and under what conditions they may be stifled. There have such changes come about in forty years, by the emigration of the native population and the silent substitution of another, that, by the census of 1880, seventy-two per cent. of the births in New England were within the inclosure of the most intolerant ecclesiasticism of all human history. So our primal and basic principles may be insecure. The doctrine of the Declaration of Independence, that governmental power is derived from the people, is authoritatively declared to be atheistical and unscriptural. The old question of supremacy is still alive, therefore, and doctrines concerning the right and expediency of property, which were discussed by Aristotle and Plato, are filling all industrial communities with controversies between labor and capital, and revolts against accumulation of property. It may be that great modifications are yet to be made in the constitution of society, and that education and liberty will have a long work to perform in dissipating or relieving the burdens of society at this point on the world's surface, at which men and races are convening from all the regions of the earth.

An obscurity equally comprehensive and profound vexes all conceptions of the future of the commonwealth. But it is an ancient teaching that "immortal night is called the nurse of the gods," and out of the perplexities of thought well-founded ideas are slowly evolved. We may believe that the little towns, with their citizenship and rights of election and representation, capable of assimilating every new and serviceable element that may be developed, will be indestructible germs of that form of political life; that they will survive the wreck of successive national experiments in organizing society and changing its forms, and prove a permanent contribution to Universal History. The products of a historical unit, those concrete results which are to be carried forward in making up the course of universal history, are impersonal to the last degree. If there may be a Philosophy of History, its indications are to be looked for in them. While in the advanced condition of the future commonwealth, ideas far differing

from ours upon religion and morals and politics and social adjustment will apparently prevail, we may expect, if the race advances, the steady confirmation of the great Pilgrim and Puritan principles, which rest society and government upon the development of the individual citizen, because the displacement of Frontenac was a surmounting of the fleur-de-lys and the banners of France not merely by the standards of the republic, but by the kingliness of intellectual man.

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